



Foreword

In July 1998, the 105th Congress enacted Public Law 105-199, the National Drought Policy Act (Appendix A). This law established “an advisory commission to provide advice and recommendations on the creation of an integrated, coordinated Federal policy designed to prepare for and respond to serious drought emergencies.” The law directed the Commission to “conduct a thorough study and submit a report on national drought policy.”

Commission members were chosen according to provisions in the Act, which required representation of federal and nonfederal government entities and the private sector. The Act directed the current Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Dan Glickman, to chair the Commission. Members of the Commission selected Ronald R. Morriss, County Supervisor of Santa Cruz County, Arizona, and representing the National Association of Counties, as Vice Chair.

This document constitutes the report of the National Drought Policy Commission. The report presents the basis for national drought policy and calls for commitment and resolve in providing sufficient resources to achieve the policy goals.

None of our recommendations should be construed as diminishing the rights of states to control water through state law, as specifically directed by the National Drought Policy Act, nor as interfering in any way with state, local, and tribal sovereignty. All of our recommendations should be considered in light of the need to protect the environment, as also required by the National Drought Policy Act.